The products of Aali are simple in the extreme, pots, bowls, water jars and dishes, utensils which have always been used by the people of Bahrain and which still find a ready market though the increased prosperity of the people enables them to buy cheap imported goods. It is not necessary to go to Aali itself to see the products of the potteries for at the Suq al-Araba in Manama on Wednesday mornings and at the Suq al-Khamis market on Thursday mornings the people of Aali bring their goods for sale. 323 [443]

At Aali the photographer will find many subjects for his camera. The potters in their workshops with the sun shining on the damp yellow clay, the symmetrical stacks of jars drying in the sun, the small boys in bright clothes running up and down the steep sides of the tumuli with objects to be baked and finally the removal of the finished articles, all these scenes provide fascinating pictures.

NURA (LIME)

Aali, as well as being the centre of the Bahrain pottery industry, is the principal place where lime is produced. Stone for the purpose is hewn from the ground in many parts of Bahrain, especially near Rifaa, and is taken in lorries or in donkey carts to Aali. Here the blocks of limestone are arranged on layers of wood, usually date palm trunks, and the wood is then fired. Men with large wooden flails stand round the piles of lime-stone and beat it into powder, chanting as they work and timing the singing to the down strokes of the threshers. When the lime becomes fine powder it is sieved and then placed in sacks. The produce of Aali commands a ready sale, for all the white-wash used in Bahrain is made there or in the neighbourhood and with the present building activities the people of the country have their work cut out to supply the local demand. 317 438 [461] [339]

There is also in Bahrain a lime factory, owned by a member of the Ruling Family, where lime is produced by modern methods.

FISHING

Fish and fish oil are used for many purposes in Bahrain. The former is one of the staple items of food among the poorer classes, it is used for manure in gardens and for feeding cows and donkeys. Fish oil is used for oiling wooden boats to make them seaworthy. The fact that Bahrain cows are fed on fish, together with dates, date stones, lucerne and bran, leads people to expect that the local milk will taste unusual. This is not true despite the reports of journalists, who hear about the fishy diet without tasting the milk and describe its flavour as unpleasant. Milk from Bahrain cows, if they receive a balanced diet, is unusually good and has a higher average fat content than the milk of ordinary English cows. The use of fish oil on the boats along the shore has little to commend itself to visitors, the smell is extremely disagreeable and drives the people who live in houses near the sea to shut all their windows when the boats are being treated. 262 237 501